

JS 206, Section 1: Grad. Seminar in Juvenile Justice
MH 510 (Conference Room), Mondays 5:30-8:15
Class #: 56793
SJSU, Fall 2007

Instructor:

William Armaline, Ph.D.

Office: MH 513

Office Hours: Mon./Wed. 9:00-11:00 a.m.

(or by appointment via email)

Email: warmali@yahoo.com

DO NOT USE MY UNIVERSITY ADDRESS!

(It is, so far, prone to failure.)

INTRODUCTORY NOTES FROM INSTRUCTOR:

- (1) All out-of-class correspondence (scheduling changes, room changes, and so forth) from instructor to students will be done through university email and/or peoplesoft announcements. Be sure to have this mail forwarded to whatever address you tend to check, and/or make sure to check this address regularly. Thank you.
- (2) For all students with special and/or personal needs of any kind: please do not hesitate to meet with me such that I can help put you in contact with available campus resources and facilitate an enjoyable experience for everyone. This is also an open invitation to all students—my door and email are always open to students with questions, concerns, suggestions, etc. I encourage you to take advantage of this invitation...

The Subjective Stance of the Instructor on Pedagogy (teaching) and Social Science:

- (1) THIS COURSE REQUIRES THE DISCUSSION OF MATURE AND CONTROVERCIAL TOPICS AND MAY INCLUDE THE USE OF MATURE LANGUAGE AND SUBJECT MATTER. Issues covered in this course include (but are not limited to): adult and child sexual and physical abuse, provocative political content, police/correctional brutality and torture, and so forth. We will also be reading materials and watching films that include mature content. IF ANY OF THIS MAKES YOU UNCOMFORTABLE, PLEASE ARRANGE TO SPEAK WITH THE PROFESSOR (all concerns will be respected and taken seriously).
- (2) We can think of this course as an intellectual space, where we will grapple together with understanding, interpreting, and interacting with our world in theory and practice. Within this space, there are no stupid questions, nothing is safe from critical examination (including this syllabus), and everything is subject to change (by instructor or students). I hope that we will push the limits of our shared intellectual space through taking risks and discussing

material and experiences in ways that are creative, provocative, and (most importantly) fun.

- (3) Teaching and learning involve reciprocal relationships between all those involved. In other words, we are all students—we all have legitimate perspectives to offer, and this course should be seen as a collective endeavor. That said, we ALL will share the responsibilities of making the course provocative and enjoyable.
- (4) In agreement with scholars such as Dewey and Freire, I believe that learning is maximized (especially when the educational goals include creating democratic, ‘free,’ egalitarian communities) in a cooperative environment where the lines blur between teacher and student, and where grades and other coercive tools of hierarchical domination are not the focus of the course or educational project. Instead, learning will hopefully be driven by our own curiosities, interests, experiences, and feelings of social and personal responsibility.
- (5) I believe that the point of social science is to understand societies and our relationship to them in order to CHANGE them “for the better.” Of course, what a “better society” looks like is a subjective question that we will continually have to consider, debate, and discuss.

Course Description:

This seminar is *not* designed for rote memorization and simple issues of praction (i.e. ‘job training’) in the field of juvenile justice. As illustrated in the SJSU course catalogue, this seminar is designed for us to critically examine the “philosoph(ies), theories, relevant law, research, [and] constitutional issues related to juvenile justice.” In other words, we will look at what happens in institutions of juvenile ‘justice’ and critically examine the philosophical and ideological roots of such institutions, their policies, and their practices. Further, we will explore alternative philosophies, ideologies, and practices to consider how juvenile ‘justice’ is, and could be ‘done’ in the US.

We will draw from course readings, course materials, current events (media), personal experience(s), film, artwork, and online resources to explore the concept of ‘justice’ as it relates to youth. As a central topic of the course, we will analyze structured inequalities in relation to the juvenile ‘justice’ system from a social problems perspective.... That is, in the paraphrased words of Marx: we will study the world not simply to study it, but to try and change it.

Course Expectations:

- 1) Foster an environment that encourages participation, rather than silencing other students (be respectful, considerate, etc.)
- 2) Complete readings and assignments by dates indicated on syllabus
- 3) Show up for and participate in class
- 4) Take some risks, make this a class of your own, and enjoy yourself!

Attendance/Participation:

- 1) Attendance will be taken throughout the course. This is a discussion/student driven class, so attendance is key for the course to be productive for all involved. Students are given 2 “free” absences before losing points for each additional absence. Exceptional situations such as prolonged sickness will be considered as necessary, and should be brought to the attention of the instructor.
- 2) STUDENTS are responsible for any and all notes and materials missed in their absence. You may want to make a friend or two in class...☺.
- 3) Students are expected to make an honest effort to stay informed on current events so that our class discussions can relate to the world beyond SJSU. In the words of C.W. Mills, we will be helping each other to develop a “sociological imagination.”
- 4) Students are expected to contribute to and participate in class discussions and activities to the best of their abilities and comfort levels. For those students with special needs, several other avenues and measures of participation can be pursued to ensure an equitable environment. (For instance, weekly papers may be expanded to include discussion questions and comments in lieu of verbal participation.)

Attendance and Participation will count for **20%** of the final course grade.

Response Papers:

Each week you will complete a 2-3 page reflection/response to course readings and questions posed by the instructor and fellow students. Response papers should be typed (normal margins, 12 point font, double spaced, etc.), and you are encouraged to keep them organized in an electronic file for your easy access and retrieval. The response papers will be collected each week and used to facilitate course discussion and activities. They will also create a direct, private line of communication between instructor and student. You are encouraged to (beyond or within the assignment) bring up concerns, questions, suggestions, topics for discussions, and so forth via these weekly writing assignments.

Journals will count for **60%** of your course grade.

Final Papers:

Throughout the course, you will be asked to constantly consider how course materials and discussions relate to *your* life and the kind of society *you* would like to live and participate in. Final papers will give you the *opportunity* to construct a ‘final’ (this is never final per se, but a constant process that will not end with graduation...) reflection on these larger, fundamental questions. Where this is a student driven, democratic classroom, *you* will decide how these final reflections should be constructed and presented. We will discuss the final papers in more detail in class.

Final papers will count for **20%** of your course grade.

Extra Credit:

You have unlimited extra credit opportunities in this course. Students may bring in art, film, poetry, music, readings, newspaper/magazine articles, food (as it applies to culture for example), etc. with a 2-3 page explanation of how it applies to course material or relevant current events and policy debates. More credit will be given to those who present their extra credit materials to the class. EC points will be given subjectively based on effort and creativity. We will discuss the topic of extra credit in more detail in class.

Required Texts*:

Ayers, William. (1998). *A Kind and Just Parent*. Beacon Press.

ISBN-10: 0807044032

Roberts, Dorothy. (2003). *Shattered Bonds*. Basic Books.

ISBN-10: 0465070590

Wright, Paul (Ed.) (2003). *Prison Nation*. NY:Routledge.

ISBN-10: 0415935377

*Note: Several other course materials will be passed out by the instructor, made available online (WebCT), or made available via library reserve services.

Course Schedule:

Note: Readings and assignments are in *italics* listed on the date they are DUE.

- | | |
|------|--|
| 8/27 | Course Introduction, Review Syllabus, etc.
Introduction Activity—"Life as spectacle"
The Sociological Imagination and Fundamental Questions |
| 9/3 | NO CLASS—LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
*EC given to those who research the related history of Labor and May Day in the US.... |
| 9/10 | Concepts under Deconstruction: "deviant, delinquent, criminal"
Discuss excerpts from Foucault
<i>Read Discipline and Punish Excerpts</i>
<i>Discuss and collect response papers</i> |

- 9/17 Contextualizing Juvenile ‘Justice’: Capitalism, Racism, and the Contemporary (post-1970) Prison Industrial Complex.
Read Loic Wacquant, “The Great Penal Leap Backward: Incarceration in America from Nixon to Clinton” (WebCT)
Discuss and collect response papers on Wacquant
- 9/24 The Prison Industrial Complex Continued
Read Introduction to Prison Nation, and three additional chapters of your choice (as per your interests!).
Discuss response papers in groups (share readings and responses) and collect papers
- 10/1 Juvenile Court and Detention: Brief history and discussion
 What defines a juvenile?
 Discuss Held’s concept of “other people’s kids”
 Connecticut’s “Raise the Age” Campaign (CT Juvenile Justice Alliance)
Read first section (defined in class based on student feedback) of Kind and Just Parent
Collect response papers
- 10/8 Juvenile Court and Detention Continued
 Related issues of Education and ‘Rehabilitation’
Read second section of Kind and Just Parent
Collect response papers
- 10/15 Juvenile Court and Detention Continued
Read third and final section of Kind and Just Parent
Collect response papers
 Watch film: System Failure (CYA)
 Assign online readings for 10/22
- 10/22 International Human Rights in relation to Juvenile Justice in the US
Online investigation (UN website) of UN Human Rights documents
 Do human rights matter?? What are they anyway?
Discuss and collect response papers
- 10/29 The US Juvenile Justice System and Human Rights
 In class readings and discussion: Amnesty International and HRW reports on the US Criminal Justice system
Discuss and collect response papers
- 11/5 Overlap of Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare systems
Read first section (defined in class based on student feedback) of Shattered Bonds
Discuss and collect response papers

- 11/12 VETERAN'S DAY—NO CLASS
- 11/19 Discussion of Child Welfare and Structured Inequalities (continued)
Read second section of Shattered Bonds
Discuss and collect response papers
FINAL PAPER TOPICS/OUTLINES DUE
- 11/26 Juvenile Justice, Child Welfare, and the “Criminalization of Survival”
Read third and final section of Shattered Bonds
Discuss and collect response papers
- 12/3 Alternatives to current systems, policies, and practices
Film, music, and discussion.
Discuss and collect response papers
LAST DAY TO TURN IN EC ASSIGNMENTS!!
- 12/10 Peer-to-peer collaboration on final papers
Meetings with instructor (all in class)

FINAL PAPERS DUE TO INSTRUCTOR ON OR BEFORE 5:00 P.M., 12/17